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Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development

Written statement* submitted by the Chinese People's Association for Peace and Disarmament, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in
accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[12 March 2014]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting
non-governmental organization(s).

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Cultural Rights Protection of Ethnic Minorities in China

We believe that great efforts have been made in China over the years in protecting the cultural rights of ethnic minorities, which have proved to be fruitful and effective, although some problems still remain.

We note that a number of policies and initiatives have been issued in China in recent years to help protect the cultural rights of ethnic minorities. For example, relevant provisions have been made in multiple legal and policy documents, including the *Several Opinions of the State Council on Further Boosting Ethnic Cultural Undertakings*, the *Law on Intangible Cultural Heritage*, the *Cultural Reform and Development Plan during the National 12th Five-Year Plan Period* and the *12th Five-year Plan for Development of Undertakings Related to Ethnic Minority Groups*. These provisions cover matters such as accelerating the construction of public cultural infrastructures for ethnic minorities and in ethnic areas, developing press and broadcasting in ethnic minority languages, exploring and preserving cultural relics and documentation of ethnic minority groups, respecting and protecting ethnic minority languages, and developing education for ethnic minorities. Meanwhile, a number of projects have been implemented to enrich and develop the cultural life of ethnic minorities. Examples are the projects for protecting villages with ethnic features, extending radio and TV broadcasting coverage to every village, playing films in rural areas, sharing information on cultural resources, building rural reading rooms, protecting intangible cultural heritage and constructing libraries and cultural centers (stations).

We see with appreciation that:

Cultural institutions and infrastructures for ethnic minority groups have been improved. Statistics show that currently there are nearly 10,000 artistic and cultural organizations in ethnic autonomous areas.

Ethnic cultural heritage and documentation have been rescued and protected to a certain extent. For example, in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity and the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding of the United Nations, 13 out of the 34 items from China are related to ethnic minority groups.

Progress has been made in the use and development of spoken and written languages of ethnic minorities. Currently, the use and development by ethnic minority groups of their own spoken and written languages have been covered in 14 laws and 16 regulations in China. According to statistics, currently in China there are 38 publishing houses of books in ethnic languages, as well as 99 newspapers and 222 periodicals in ethnic languages. The Central People's Broadcasting Station and the local radios in areas with concentrated ethnic communities broadcast in 21 ethnic languages every day. In addition, the "bilingual teaching" in both mandarin and ethnic languages launched in ethnic autonomous areas have received support.

Cultural and artistic talents from ethnic minority groups have been developed and artistic creation has become more active. There are 24 higher and secondary art schools specialized in developing artistic talents from ethnic minority groups in the areas with concentrated ethnic communities in China, and some other higher and secondary art schools also have specialized ethnic minority classes.

National ethnic cultural events have played an active role in the heritage, innovation and spread of ethnic cultures. Currently in China the National Ethnic Arts Festival is held every five years, the National Traditional Ethnic Minority Sports Meeting is held every four years, the National Ethnic Minority Folk Performances and China Ethnic Theater Festival are held every three years and the National Exhibition of Teaching Achievements in Vocational Schools in Ethnic Areas is held every year. These events among others have played an active role in the protection, development and spread of ethnic cultures and the fusion and harmonious coexistence of diverse cultures.

Local cultural and sports activities with ethnic features are very helpful for carrying forward the traditional ethnic cultures. Take Naadam in Inner Mongolia and Torch Festival in Yunnan for example, the events have not only widely

attended by local people but also attracted people across the country for cultural and tourism activities. Therefore they have both carried forward the traditional cultures and increased local tourism revenues.

However, we also see that there are still some real difficulties and challenges facing the protection and development of cultural rights of ethnic minorities.

For example: The construction of the systems for public cultural service is still weak in ethnic areas. Some counties and cities in ethnic areas have no cultural center or library and some townships have no cultural station. Especially in some border areas, the facilities and conditions for public culture are even weaker and the public cultural services available are limited.

The scale and quality of the bilingual education in ethnic areas are yet to be improved. Bilingual teachers in ethnic areas are insufficient.

We urge Chinese Government that:

More input should be channeled to the protection and development of traditional culture and education in ethnic areas. Adequate attention should be paid to the nature for public good of ethnic cultural products and services and efforts be made in ensuring the supply of ethnic cultural products.

Intensified efforts should be made in promoting the reform and innovation in the systems and mechanisms related to ethnic cultures and attracting more non-governmental inputs to the industrial development and market competition of ethnic cultures.

More resources should be invested in the implementation of "bilingual teaching" to meet the needs of ethnic minorities for passing on their traditional cultures and getting jobs and integrating in other parts of China.
